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INSIDE



RAV4 Rules

The 2004 Toyota RAV4 got the highest ratings on both front and side crash tests performed by the insurance industry, but only when tested with its optional side air bags, according to crash test results released Sunday.

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Dhaka Threatened

Workers and volunteers frantically stacked sandbags Sunday to protect Bangladesh's capital from rising water, and a crowded boat ferrying villagers across flood waters capsized in northeastern India, killing at least 10 people.

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Overdrive

This week, we test drive the head-turning 2004 Honda Element EXS 4WD. This low-cost, SUV-style multipurpose vehicle capitalizes on the "square box" military design, proving that modern styling doesn't necessarily make a showroom winner.

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Multiple jobs regulations adopted

By JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

The Commonwealth yesterday adopted comprehensive amendments to labor regulations governing nonresident workers, allowing them to work for more than one employer on the islands.

Stressing the importance of a thorough change in the CNMI's labor policy, the Babauta administration assured that it would work with the private sector as it adjusts to the new rules.

'Actual implementation may take time'

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

While labor regulations allowing multiple jobs for nonresident workers will be legally in effect starting next week, it may take some more time for the Department of Labor to actually start processing second employment applications from alien workers, the Division of Labor head said yesterday.

Labor director Dean O. Tenorio said the department's staff will need some time to prepare for the implementation of the new regulations, which he described as "a major reform."

"We rewrote the entire rules which have been in effect since their inception in 1988. That is why it took us a lot of months. We had to think through the problems. There are also some things

See ACTUAL on Page 12

Gov. Juan N. Babauta's legal counsel, Steven Newman, said the change in alien labor policy is the first after several years.

"We anticipate the smooth transition as the rules become effective," said Newman. "The administration will work with the private sector—employers and employees—as they adjust to these new regulations."

Newman said the new rules take effect 10 calendar days after yesterday's publication of Labor Secretary Joaquin Tenorio's certification of the regulations'

See MULTIPLE on Page 12

8 countries eligible for 90-day stay

By AGNES E. DONATO
REPORTER

The Attorney General's Office has named eight countries whose senior citizens may be allowed to stay on the islands for up to 90 consecutive days.

Eligible for a comity entry permit are tourists at least 55 years old who hold a passport from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Singapore, and United Kingdom.

These countries provide a comparable permit to citizens of the Commonwealth.

In an order dated July 22, attorney general Pamela Brown noted that applicants for CEPs must have a passport valid for at least 60 days after the expected date of departure.

The memorandum came pursuant to the adoption of emergency regulations implementing Public Law 14-6.

Signed into effect on May 20, the law authorizes the extension of senior tourists' entry permits from a period of 30 days to 90 days.

On June 29, the regulations were adopted on an emergency basis—or upon fewer than the usual 30 days notice—"to provide the benefit of Public Law 14-6 to aliens seeking to visit the Commonwealth during the 2004 summer season," according to then acting attorney general Clyde Lemons Jr.

The regulations will be effective for 120 days. After that, the regulations need to be reintroduced for them to become permanent.

Under the rules, the immediate
See 8 COUNTRIES on Page 12

An elderly Japanese couple sample some of the sights in Garapan.

AGNES E. DONATO

Inos confident that teachers will pass Praxis

Some 80 percent of a group of public school teachers who had volunteered to take the Praxis exam passed the test, according to Education Commissioner Rita H. Inos in a statement.

With this result, Inos said she is confident that the vast majority of Public School System teachers will pass the teacher core knowledge test on or before August 31, 2005, as required by the Board of Education.

She said 80 percent of the group of teachers who volunteered to take the Praxis test passed it on their first try.

"With the BOE providing over a year's lead time, [I] anticipate that our teachers will meet this BOE mandate," she said.

This is on top of what Inos said is her sure knowledge of the caliber of teachers instructing in public schools.

Further, by meeting this BOE mandate, the teachers will have demonstrated that



Inos

they meet or exceed the minimum standards for highly qualified teachers under the No Child Left Behind Act, she added.

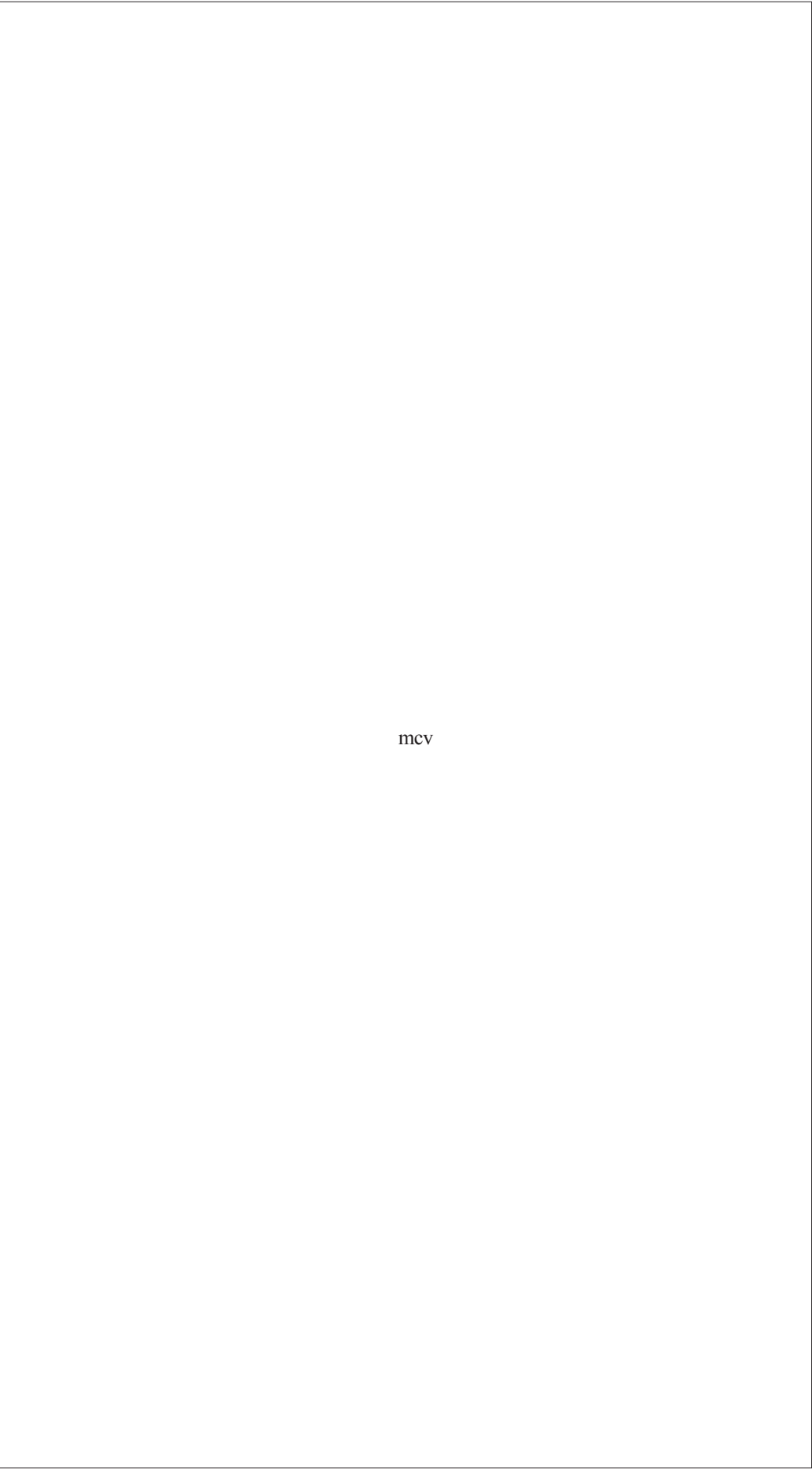
"Since we test our students knowledge on all core subjects on a regular basis, isn't it

only logical that we test our teacher's knowledge of the subject matter that they are teaching to our students?" she asked rhetorically.

Inos said that both principals and teachers were informed that a teacher entrance exam would be required of all new teachers wishing to teach in the CNMI Public School System and this test would be a condition of renewal for all teachers

See INOS on Page 12

Local



mcv

Homestead rules for servicemen to be relaxed

BY JOHN RAVELO
REPORTER

Relatives of CNMI reservists who left for training in Hawaii and possible deployment to the Middle East or Afghanistan need not worry that militarymen would lose their homestead permits due to abandonment.

A legislative measure that seeks to relax the homestead conditions for those serving the U.S. Armed Forces would ensure that they will not lose their lots while on active duty.

Senate Bill 14-47, also known as the Military Service

Homestead Act of 2004, is now on the desk of Gov. Juan N. Babauta for his signature to become law.

Under existing laws, homesteaders who abandon homestead land or have failed to maintain them as required by homestead rules face permit revocation, with the land reverting back to the government.

The Legislature passed the bill to recognize the important role of the CNMI's militarymen to national security. "Every effort should be made to assist these distinguished individuals in maintaining their homesteads

while on active duty."

The bill contains a provision that explicitly prohibits the revocation of permits by homesteaders serving the military while he or she is on active duty, in addition to the Marianas Pub-

lic Lands Authority's discretion to extend homesteaders' compliance deadline in cases where apparent violations of homestead rules are unavoidable.

Some 80 CNMI reservists recently trooped to Hawaii for

Army Reserve training and possible deployment to augment U.S. forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. The reservists include at least 30 personnel from the Department of Public Safety, including Deputy Com-

missioner Franklin Babauta.

Gov. Juan N. Babauta recently assured visiting U.S. Pacific Command commander Adm. Thomas Fargo of his administration's support for the reservists.

'Ban on tint to address rise in auto accidents'

With statistics indicating a steady increase in auto-related accidents, Department of Public Safety commissioner Edward C. Camacho reiterated his push to ban tinting on vehicles in the CNMI.

Camacho said the ban is one way to address the rise of auto crashes, citing that the ban would provide higher visibility for vehicle operators.

"Many of the accidents are caused due to limited visibility," he said during an interview. "[Banning of tint] is just one way of dealing with it. There are a lot of reasons that serve as causes for accidents that are beyond our control, like road conditions, but we will be working with the Department of Public Works on that."

Earlier, Camacho said fully tinted vehicles present operators with a difficulty "to see, even with the headlights on."

"[And] that gets worse once it starts to rain. The tint further limits visibility [and the move to ban it] is just to promote safety and go back to having visual contact and communication between vehicle operators," he said.

He said a product is currently available on the market that "keeps heat out without darkening the windshield."

"Put the tint chemical on the windshield and that will repel the heat, and the car will be as cool as if there's no sun out."

Further, the commissioner said he understands the use of tints for "law enforcement type operations."

Statistics indicate that auto-related accidents in the CNMI escalated by 7.43 percent in the first half of this year compared to the same period last year, while the number of fatalities recorded have already matched the entire number posted last year.

The report indicate that a total of 1,662 auto-related crashes were reported between January and June this year—an increase of 115 cases compared to the same period last year, which posted 1,547 accidents.

The number is on pace to surpass last year's total of 3,168 cases.

Also, the DPS recorded a total of seven deaths as a result of auto-related accidents, matching the number recorded for the entire 12-month period last year.

Further, a total of 3,168 accidents complaints were reported last year, an increase of 723 to that of 2002, which had 2,445 traffic related crashes. *(Shan Seman)*

DPS to conduct checkpoints

The Department of Public Safety's Traffic Division will be conducting occupant protection and child restraint and sobriety checkpoints this week.

The occupant protection and child restraint checkpoint will be held tomorrow, July 28, on Beach Road Susupe by the Pedro P. Tenorio Multi-Purpose Building. It will start at 8am and end at 9:15am.

The sobriety checkpoint, on the other hand, would be conducted on July 30, Friday, on 16 Highway Chalan Kiya by the CUC Waterloo Station. This operation will start at about

9:30pm and will be terminated at about 10:45pm.

Each checkpoint conducted will last at least 75 minutes (one hour and 15 minutes) at each location.

This activity is part of the DPS' efforts to deter and detect and ensure that all vehicle occupants are protected.

In addition, traffic officers will be conducting highway criminal interdictions, saturation patrols, aggressive driver interdiction, and laser activities.

For more information, contact Sgt. Sylvan M. Rangamar at 664-9084/5/6.

crees

HEROES

KNIGHT

COMMUNITY Briefs

Chuukese meeting set

This is to inform all citizens of Chuuk in the CNMI that there will be an important meeting on July 31, at 11:30pm. Chuuk Gov. Ansito Walter will be on island to meet with you. The meeting will be at the residence of Mrs. Rita K. Billy in Gualo Rai.

SNISWCD meeting

The Saipan and Northern Islands Soil and Water Conservation District would like to inform the general public of their meeting on Aug. 5, 2004 at 1:30pm, at the Natural Resources Conservation Service Office. For more information contact the office at 234-6170.

UPAA moves raffle draw date

The University of the Philippines Alumni Association CNMI Chapter has moved the June 12 fundraising raffle draw to Aug. 14, Saturday.

Those who have not yet purchased tickets are encouraged to do so. Proceeds will go to the UPAA's "Donate a Classroom Project" in the Philippines, and will help recognize and support deserving CNMI students.

The Aug. 14 raffle drawing will be held at the POLO office, 1st Floor of Nauru Building in Susupe, 6pm.

Torres offers free notarial services

Former congressman Stanley T. Torres, who is also a notary public, is offering free notarial services to all U.S. Army Reservists and their dependents.

Torres can be contacted through the offices of:
Rep. Heinz Hofschneider 664-6969
Rep. Jesus Attao 664-8822
Rep. David Apatang 664-8980
Or in an emergency 287-9255

Social Security visit to Rota postponed

The Social Security representative's visit to Rota, originally scheduled for July 16, has been postponed because the Pacific Islands Aviation flight from Saipan to Rota has been cancelled. The visit will be rescheduled when reliable air service from Saipan to Rota is again available.

For more information, Rota residents can call toll free at 532-9421. The local number on Saipan is 234-6203.

OFW health screening reset

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Philippine Overseas Labor Office and the OFW Advisory Council is informing the Filipino community on Saipan that the Health Screening Program this July is rescheduled for August 1, 2004, 9am, at the Ground Floor of the Nauru Building.

NMC English placement tests

Following is the schedule of our upcoming English Placement Tests:

Thursday	July 29	Room D-1	1pm-4pm
Friday	July 30	Room D-1	5:30pm-8:30pm
Thursday	November 4	Room D-1	1pm-4pm
Friday	November 5	Room D-1	5:30pm-8:30pm

There is a \$25 fee for the English Placement Test that must be paid in advance at NMC's Finance Office (M-F, 9am-4pm). Students will not be admitted to the testing room without proof of payment-a receipt for either the placement test fee or the NMC application fee.

All students seeking a degree and/or certificate are required to take the English placement test.

Residential, biz inspections in Kagman II village

The Division of Environmental Quality and the Bureau of Environmental Health would like to inform the residents of Kagman II village that on-site disposal system and premise compliance inspections would be conducted on residential and business facilities. The inspections has been ongoing since April 21, 2004 and will continue to be conducted every Tuesday and Wednesday.

Kagman II residents are requested to cooperate with inspectors in keeping their dog(s) on a leash, for the safety of the inspectors. Both BEH and DEQ inspectors are required to wear their respective uniforms and photo identification during all inspections.

For additional information on the OSDS inspections, contact the BEH office at 664-4870/2 or the DEQ office at 664-8500/1.

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JULY 2, 2004									
DEPARTURES					ARRIVALS				
Saipan-Majuro					Majuro-Saipan				
0600	0700	0700	0700	0700	0600	0700	0700	0700	0700
0630	0730	0730	0730	0730	0630	0730	0730	0730	0730
0700	0800	0800	0800	0800	0700	0800	0800	0800	0800
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Program shows island life to Tokyo students

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

A group of students with ages ranging from 8 and 13 arrived Friday from Tokyo, Japan and are currently taking part in a weeklong student cultural exchange program coordinated by the Saipan Mayor’s Office.

According to David Rosario of the Mayor’s Office, 14 families on Saipan have voluntarily

welcomed the 22 students and are currently hosting them in their homes. The group is part of the International Students’ Association of Japan.

“We asked for volunteers and were fortunate that these families came out to take part in the program,” he said. “Eight of the families sponsored two kids while six are sponsoring one child.”

The trip marked the 25th

anniversary of the program, which began in 1979. The group is scheduled to return to Japan this Friday.

Rosario said in an interview yesterday that among the things the students showed interest in while on Saipan are sightseeing, shopping, and exploring the various beaches. Activities and tours are conducted by the Mayor’s office and a chaperone from Japan.

“The whole point of this exchange program is to promote culture and friendship,” he said. “These kids are now learning the cultures and the way of life on Saipan, and are building friendship and relationships with people here. They spend the night with their host families, and in the morning, are dropped off at the Mayor’s office. The families then pick them up late in the afternoon.”

Rosario said the exchange program continues this October, with students from private and public schools on Saipan to be invited to a one-week program in Japan.

“We are going to advertise it, and the only thing the students need to come up with is money for the roundtrip and pocket money. Other than that, all expenses are covered by the host families in Japan, just like

all expenses for food, drinks, transportation, and rooms are provided for the guest students that are here,” he said.

The exchange program is just one of three programs coordinated by the Saipan Mayor’s Office. Another is scheduled this Thursday, with about 30 Japanese students expected to arrive, while the other occurs in December and features students from Korea.

Ernst & Young donates to MY WAVE Clubs

Ernst & Young CPA, an international accounting firm, has joined the ranks of a growing number of companies and groups supporting MY WAVE tourism clubs, signing up for a bronze sponsorship package that would help fund various activities of the school-based organization.

MY WAVE clubs were created to teach children about the importance of the visitor industry to the CNMI.

Ernst & Young partner James Whitt and Saipan office manager Sinforosa Magofna handed a \$750 check for the sponsorship package to the Marianas Tourism Education Council board during simple ceremonies held at the Marianas Visitors Authority late last Friday afternoon.

MTEC, in partnership with the Public School System, organized the MY WAVE Clubs in

2001 to help revitalize the tourism industry by raising awareness at the community level.

To date, there are over 600 MY WAVE Club members in 14 public schools, including Rota High School. Efforts are underway to expand membership to private schools, according to Pete Mesngon, a Dandan Elementary School teacher who also is president of the MY WAVE Club advisers.

MY WAVE Club activities include airport and hotel lobby greetings where the students mingle with tourists to give them the “hafa adai” spirit; beach cleanups; singing Christmas carols to tourists during the Yuletide season; tree-planting and village beautification, among others.

Other groups and companies who have recently signed up or agreed to obtain a MY WAVE

sponsorship package are Tan Holdings Corp. and the Hotel Association of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The MTEC board is composed of MVA managing director Vicky I. Benavente; PSS Associate Commissioner Rita Sablan; James Whitt; and DFS-Saipan president Marian Aldan-Pierce.

Other members are Northern Marianas College president Tony DL Guerrero, NMC tourism instructor Larry Lee, Yoichi Matsumura, general manager of the travel and tour company Pacific Development Inc.; Dai-ichi Hotel general manager Mark Swinton; Ray Dela Cruz, head of the Tinian Mayor’s Office’s promotions; Jon Cramer, director of the Pacific Islands Club’s sports and entertainment activities; and Lynne Michael of the Rota Dive Shop.



Man arrested after refusing to pay bill

Police arrested a man after he reportedly refused to pay his bill at a nightclub in Garapan Sunday night.

According to a police report, the suspect, whose name was not disclosed, was arrested for theft of service after refusing to pay over \$300 at the Russian Roulette.

The police department had sent an officer to the site after receiving a call from the establishment complaining about the non-paying customer. Upon arriving at the scene, a security guard of the nightclub pointed out the suspect to the officer. The man, who was already outside the club, was escorted back inside.

The officer then interviewed Nadejda Zy-bina, the manager of the club, who explained the incident.

The report showed that, when asked if the allegation was true, the suspect acknowledged it. “From there, I asked the suspect if what Ms. Zy-bina just said was true and he said, ‘Yes, I walked out because I am not going to pay for that bill,’” the officer said in his report.

Preliminary investigation indicated that the suspect entered the premises at about 7:50pm and ordered a beer. It disclosed that the waitress who served him, 22-year-old Evgeniya Ostrovskaya, offered to sit with him for company, and the suspect agreed.

“She then informed him that it will cost him \$10 every 15 minutes just for sitting with him and the suspect agreed,” the report stated. “She then added that the suspect continued to order more alcoholic beverages.”

The report indicated that the manager of the establishment had also approached the suspect at about 9:30pm and had also offered

to accompany him—for the same price—and the suspect agreed.

“Next, she said the suspect bought her two lady’s drinks,” it stated.

During an interview, Zy-bina told the responding officer that the cost of the drinks, the company of another hostess, and herself amounted to \$345.

The suspect was arrested and taken to the Adult Correctional Facility where he was detained.

The suspect reportedly threatened the officer while being arrested.

“He began to threaten me by saying that I was in big trouble because he works for Chief Justice [John] Manglona,” the officer said.

The report noted that the officer attempted to get the suspect’s bio data but was unable to do so as the suspect was “uncooperative due to his intoxication.” *(Shan Seman)*

Another gas station falls victim to theft of gas

Another gas station fell victim to theft after an unidentified suspect sped away without paying for the gas he took.

Department of Public Safety public information officer Pete C. Muna said the cashier of the San Vicente Mobil Gas Station witnessed the suspect filling \$5 worth of gas into his vehicle before fleeing without paying.

“According to the cashier, she stated that the suspect was driving a vehicle with a personalized license plate SOBER,” he said.

This is the second gasoline theft reported in a span of one week.

Last Wednesday, an unidentified male driving a Toyota Tercel with license plate number ABV-512 reportedly had his gas tank filled with \$20 worth of gas at the Mobil Mart Gas Station along Middle Road Garapan and sped away without paying. *(Shan Seman)*

CARS UNLIMITED

movie house



‘MADE IN THE CNMI?’
Gov. Juan N. Babauta demonstrates to reporters a CamelBak product, which a Korean investor plans to manufacture here in the CNMI for the U.S. Department of Defense. Babauta said Dong-In Entech Co., Ltd. is in the process of identifying a land that would house the multi-million dollar investment. CamelBak is a leading name in outdoor gear products, including military backpacks and hydration systems. The governor recently invited the company to meet with officials of the CNMI Department of Commerce in connection with the proposed venture.

CNMI’s HR group to discuss EEOC, Cobra

The Society for Human Resource Management has invited Timothy Riera of the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and Cindy Adams of the U.S. Department of Labor to speak at a special half-day meeting.

Riera will discuss current issues with Equal Employment Opportunity such as the definition of an online applicant and will provide updates on the Commission.

Adams will discuss the U.S.

Department of Labor’s final changes on the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act. These changes will make it easier for employees to understand their rights under COBRA and make it easier for employers to meet their obligation notice.

Both issues being discussed will affect public and private sector employers in the CNMI.

“Join is to learn more about EEOC and COBRA and how they affect your organization,”

the group said in a statement.

The meeting will be held at the Charley’s Cabaret, Pacific Islands Club Saipan on July 29, from 8am to 1pm. The cost, including lunch is \$35 for SHRM members and \$45 for non-SHRM members.

Seating is limited; therefore members and others interested in attending this meeting should contact Shane at 234-1234 ext. 5415 or Andrea at 235-6231 ext. 5122 for reservations. *(PR)*

Tourist nearly drowns off Laulau

By SHAN SEMAN
REPORTER

A female tourist who was diving off the shore of Laulau Beach nearly drowned Friday afternoon, according to the Department of Public Safety.

Fifty-one-year-old Tamiko Saito was reportedly with her daughter, Aki Saito, and dive instructor Hideki Morita at the site when the incident occurred.

Police report showed that the three began their dive at Laulau at about 9:49am. The dive lasted until 10:33am, after which the group decided to wait another hour before making a second dive.

According to the report, Morita said the second dive began at about 11:33am. He led them 50 feet out to show them the reef area, then head-

ed back to about 12 feet.

It was at that point that Morita instructed the victim’s daughter to clear her mask, which she successfully managed. The victim, however, had problems doing so.

“[Morita] said that she saw the victim was inhaling water while clearing her mask and she was coughing,” the report stated.

Morita then approached the victim and took her to the surface at about 12:16pm.

“[Morita] said the victim kept coughing and water was coming out from her mouth while at the surface...he escorted both of them to shore and transported the victim to [the Commonwealth Health Center] for treatment and examination,” the report added.

The report indicated that both Saito and her daughter had ear-

lier taken Open Water Scuba Diving lessons at the Nikko Hotel swimming pool and Sugar Dock beach under the instruction of Morita.

However, the victim’s daughter, Aki, told police that her mother had been experiencing difficulty in clearing her mask since the beginning of the scuba lessons and needed more time to practice the skills.

At about 6:28pm, DPS Boating Safety Section dispatched officers to the CHC to check on the incident.

Investigation revealed that the victim was diagnosed with fluid in her lungs and was admitted for observation and treatment by Dr. Francois Classens.

The victim and her family arrived on July 14 and are expected to go home on July 19.

Tongan policeman found not guilty of obstructing justice

NUKUALOFA, Tonga (Matangi Tonga, PIR)—A former Tongan police officer was cleared of charges that he interfered with the course of justice and of bribery connected to marijuana case evidence.

A jury of five women and two men dismissed the charges against Viliami Toki (35) in the Nuku’alofa Supreme Court on 14 July.

It was charged that on January 31, 2002 he interfered with the course of justice when he tried to persuade Police Officer ‘Unga Fa’ao to destroy the criminal case file of a woman Leiola Fifita. At that time Leiola was awaiting trial on the charge

of the possession of marijuana.

Toki was also charged that on the same day he offered to pay money to Police Officer ‘Unga Fa’ao, in consideration for him to destroy the exhibits and criminal case file of Leiola Fifita.

Counsel for the defendant, Masao Paasi in his final submission argued that there was no proof that his client interfered with the course of justice. He pointed out that Leiola Fifita had subsequently appeared in court and was found guilty, and with regards

to the charge for bribery Masao said that there was no proof of any money being paid. He also queried why the police were not very active in their pursuit to investigate the person whom it was claimed that Toki had told Police officer ‘Unga Fa’ao was willing to pay the bribery.

After a three-days trial the jury took about ten minutes to pass their decision of not guilty.

The hearing was presided over by Chief Justice Ford and the legal counsel for the Crown was ‘Aminiasi Kefu.

PNG aviation strike averted

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea (PNG Post-Courier, PIR)—The Government last night averted a crippling civil aviation strike at the 11th hour.

At about 9:30 p.m. yesterday, Civil Aviation Minister Don Polye signed a guarantee to spend K1.9 million to settle the outstanding union claims.

The unions agreed to the Minister’s guarantee and called off the proposed four-day strike action, which was to have begun at midnight.

The unions had planned to stay away from work until Monday to protest against the Civil Aviation Authority management’s failure to pay outstanding airfares for retrenched and non-retrenched officers and back payments for the pay period 1 to 12 of this year, a 5 percent salary increase for this year and performance-based salary increments.

About 200 CAA workers earlier in the day had agreed to walk off their jobs at midnight after a meeting in Port Moresby.

This would have resulted in the shutdown of vital aviation safety services nationwide offered by

the air traffic control and flight, technical and airport rescue and fire fighting divisions.

Flights by domestic airline operators, including flag carrier Air Niugini and Papua New Guinea’s largest third level airline operator PNG Airlines, would have been adversely affected.

Only international airlines flying over upper Papua New Guinean airspace and overseas-bound medivac services during the strike-period would have been spared.

Earlier in the day, PNG Airlines chief executive Simon Wild in an email to the Post-Courier said his company had contingency plans in place and would strive to maintain current operations.

“We will assess the situation tomorrow morning (this morning) and as events develop so as to ensure minimal disruption to our customers,” he said.

Air Niugini chief executive Rod Nelson was reportedly at a series of frenetic meetings late last night to map out its response in the event the strike would have eventuated.

calvary book
sale

rms



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OVERTIME CHANGES

From left, Richard L. Hamilton and Louis F. Cabuhat of the U.S. Department of Labor explain to members of the Saipan Garment Manufacturers Association changes in the Wage and Hour regulations during a two-hour training at the SGMA offices.

APIL meets on Guam for general assembly

GUAM (PDN/PIR)—The Association of Pacific Island Legislatures is holding its 23rd general assembly on Guam this week.

The members of the association are the legislative assemblies of American Samoa; the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands; the Federated States of Micronesia’s Chuuk, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Yap states; the Marshall Islands; Palau; Kiribati; Nauru; Hawaii; and host Guam, the association announced.

The last APIL general assembly held on Guam was in 1999.

The theme for this year’s general assembly is “Environment and Cultural Tourism: Bridging the Islands.”

After opening ceremonies on Sunday, speakers scheduled yesterday included:

□ John Salas, University of Guam associate professor of international tourism, who talked about tourism markets of Micronesia.

□ Guam Visitors Bureau General Manager Tony Lamorena on eco-tourism and eco-cultural issues

□ Dennis Gonsalves, director, of the U.S. Pacific Basin Agricultural Research Center in Hilo, Hawaii, who talked about an emerging research force to help agriculture in Hawaii and the Pacific islands.

The generally assembly takes place at the Guam Legislature through today.

name the mall

Samoan village wants compensation for loud and dirty power generator

APIA, Samoa (Samoa Observer, PIR)—Tanugamanono village has sought redress from the Electric Power Corporation (EPC) over excessive noise pollution and gaseous fumes from the power station located there.

The village recently complained that “ear-splitting noise” from the station’s generators has become a health hazard to those living nearby.

They said that some have been diagnosed with ear problems and recurring migraines. Loud noise, they said, also disrupts daily life and especially children’s schoolwork.

Black fumes belched out by the four large generators when it is turned on at night, they said, made people nauseous.

According to village mayor Anauli Pofitu, the village council

has met with EPC general manager Muaausa Joseph Walters and senior management staff.

“The village has requested that they be provided with some monetary compensation,” Anauli said.

“We have also asked EPC for concessionary benefits such as free electricity for the whole village.”

Anauli said that they were told by EPC to give them two weeks to discuss the matter at the board level.

That decision is expected this week, he said.

Anauli revealed that EPC offered to buy all the land that was bordering the station.

“But we turned it down as all that land is customary owned and belong to the Sa Atoa family of Tanugamanono.

“The land they were asking for amounted to half the village.”

Anauli said that EPC had requested they be given time to ‘think through’ the request as any special deal might upset other villages where power stations are located.

“This power station was built in 1966 and our people have been suffering for a long time with the loud noise and fumes that it emits.”

“Nearly 40 years and much longer than any power station built in any village.”

“The problem has been raised several times in the past decade.”

A handful of families neighboring the station had been at the forefront of the issue, Anauli said.

“But now the matter has been taken up at the village level following a request by these families.”

Vanuatu election results released

MELBOURNE, Australia (Radio Australia, PIR)—The final results in Vanuatu’s snap general election has been announced.

It’s taken nine days to count and check all the ballots, and the country still doesn’t know what the new government will look like.

There’s been a big turnover of

MPs, with 25 of those elected to the 52-seat parliament being new faces. Turnout was mixed, with the Paama constituency reporting 90 percent of registered voters casting their vote, but only 41 percent did so on Pentecost.

No single party commands an obvious lead, with the previous coalition of the largely English

speaking Vanua’aku and National United Parties, plus the Greens, with 21 seats, and the Francophone Union of Moderate Parties with 8. But all the major parties are fractionalized, and both VP/NUP and the UMP are reportedly claiming they have enough support to form a government.

Business

WTO treaty talks come down to the wire

By NAOMI KOPPEL
AP WRITER

GENEVA (AP)—Government ministers from around the globe gather this week at the World Trade Organization for an 11th-hour attempt at a treaty they hope will provide a massive boost to the world economy.

They face huge differences of opinion, however, especially in the key area of agriculture, where rich and poor nations have vastly different agendas and exporters and importers have conflicting priorities.

"At a time when projectionist pressures lie just below the surface, when people across the world are demanding change, the 147 member governments of the WTO must deliver," said WTO Director-General Supachai Panitchpakdi.

Negotiators were meeting privately night and day to try to find an agree-

ment before the July 31 deadline. Formal meetings start Tuesday.

The framework should have been completed last September at a ministerial meeting in Cancun, Mexico, which collapsed without agreement. Negotiators then planned to do it by Christmas—but that deadline came and went.

If negotiators fail to reach a deal by the end of July, they realize the U.S. presidential election and government changes in other countries will leave them paralyzed until at least next year.

The treaty framework will form the structure of continued negotiations in the current "round" of trade talks. Though it is only part of the process, many believe this agreement is the crucial one and that the rest of the talks will be much smoother.

Along with Shotaro Oshima—the Japanese ambassador who heads the WTO's ruling General Coun-

cil—Supachai on July 16 produced a 15-page proposal on the structure of a future treaty.

On the key issue of agriculture, the document sets out a system ensuring that high import tariffs are cut by a larger percentage than low ones—a key demand of many agricultural exporters.

However, it also leaves room for nations to make smaller cuts on products they consider "sensitive"—often, products that are important in their domestic farming industry.

The document is short on details, saying simply that the exact formula to be used "remains under negotiation."

The proposal says all agricultural export subsidies will be eliminated by a date "to be agreed," a concession made by the European Union, which had originally refused to accept total elimination of the payments.

At the same time, the United States, Canada and others must get rid of their

own programs of support for agricultural exporters, it says.

The proposal was mostly welcomed, but some countries—notably a group of importers led by Switzerland and Japan—still say they have big problems with the text. They submitted a set of amendments, but those likely will be unacceptable to other WTO members.

The British development charity Oxfam also attacked the proposal, saying it had been subject to "considerable rich-country influence" and did not sufficiently consider the demands of poorer nations.

"Developing countries are being put in the untenable position of having to choose either to agree to a watered-down framework or accept the blame for the collapse of the talks," said Oxfam spokeswoman Celine Charveriat.

EU member France also has criticized the proposal and accused EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy

of giving too much ground over export subsidies.

One major breakthrough in recent days came when a group of African countries dropped their demands for separate negotiations on eliminating rich countries' subsidies on cotton they claim are destroying the livelihoods of African farmers.

They said they would agree to talk about cotton within the overall agricultural talks but only if specific deadlines are set for removing subsidies.

Other areas to be covered in the treaty include cutting barriers to trade in manufactured goods and service industries like telecommunications and banking, and harmonizing and simplifying customs procedures.

All WTO members agree in principle that cutting barriers to international trade, including import taxes and government subsidies, is good for the world economy.

Gas prices dip as refinery projects end

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—Gas prices dropped slightly in the past two weeks as refineries finished projects that temporarily caused a dip in production, an industry analyst said Sunday.

The weighted national average price for all three grades of gasoline fell a little less than a penny between July 9 and Friday to \$1.95 per gallon, said Trilby Lundberg, who publishes the semimonthly Lundberg Survey. The

survey polls nearly 8,000 gas stations across the United States.

That represents a drop of 15.4 cents per gallon since May 21, when the average price was slightly above \$2.10 a gallon.

The biggest seller in the two-week period was self-serve regular, which averaged \$1.92 per gallon. Mid-grade gasoline averaged \$2.02 per gallon, while premium averaged \$2.11 per gallon.

Lundberg said refineries had finished

several projects designed to maximize output for summer travel, leading to the drop in prices. She said an increase in crude oil prices prevented prices from falling even further.

The lowest average price for a gallon of self-serve regular was \$1.74, in Tulsa, Okla. The highest average price for self-serve regular was in Honolulu, where consumers are paying \$2.25 per gallon.



RAV4 rates high with optional air bags

WASHINGTON (AP)—The 2004 Toyota RAV4 got the highest ratings on both front and side crash tests performed by the insurance industry, but only when tested with its optional side air bags, according to crash test results released Sunday.

The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety said the RAV4 was the first vehicle to earn its "best pick" designation for both front and side tests. The institute began performing side-impact crash tests last year.

When tested without its side-impact air bags, however, the RAV4 received the institute's lowest rating of poor in the side test.

Adrian Lund, chief operating officer of the Insurance Institute, said he hoped the results would encourage Toyota

and other manufacturers to make head-protecting side air bags standard.

Toyota spokeswoman Martha Voss said she did not know whether the company would make air bags standard on the RAV4. It now costs \$680 for the option, which includes a head-protecting air bag that deploys from the ceiling and a side-protecting air bag that deploys from the seat.

The Insurance Institute tests the performance of vehicles in a 31-mph side crash. Lund said the 2003 RAV4, which did not offer optional side air bags, had poor structure and failed to protect the crash dummy's head. Toyota strengthened the structure of the 2004 RAV4 along with adding the side air bags option.

Lund stressed that head-protecting air bags can reduce by 45 percent

chances of serious injury in a crash, while side air bags, designed to protect the chest and abdomen, reduce chances of injury by only 10 percent.

Toyota also made structural improvements to the front of the RAV4 which helped the vehicle withstand the institute's 40-mph frontal crash test, Lund said.

The 2004 RAV4 got the highest side-impact safety rating from the government even though it was tested without its air bags. Institute spokesman Russ Rader said the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration uses a barrier that represents a car, while the institute's barrier represents a sport utility vehicle. He said NHTSA also doesn't include the amount of head injury in its calculations.

Some doubt American Airlines' strength

By DAVID KOENIG
AP BUSINESS WRITER

FORT WORTH, Texas (AP)—After staving off bankruptcy a year ago, American Airlines slashed costs below many of its competitors and its executives talked brightly about returning the largest U.S. carrier to its former glory.

Analysts praised American, which eked out a tiny profit from April to June—only its second winning quarter in three years of crushing losses. Investors bid the stock price up for a time.

Now, however, fresh doubts emerge about American's ability to regain its strength against the tide of high fuel prices, which have wiped out hope that the carrier might earn a profit this year, and an onslaught of competitors pushing low fares even lower.

More ominously, there is scant evidence that American, a unit of Fort Worth-based AMR Corp., has figured out how to win customers away from other carriers and boost revenue. American now faces competition from low-cost rivals on nearly 90 percent of its routes, frustrating the company's plans to raise fares.

And, some employees are growing restless a year after taking huge pay cuts that helped save the airline.

Flight attendants pepper Internet chat rooms with complaints about being overworked because thousands of colleagues have been laid off. Attendants on long international flights said they were denied meal and rest breaks because crews were understaffed. They filed a complaint through the union, and an arbitrator ruled in their favor—awarding back pay of \$9 million to \$14 million, which the airline must pay in October.

Phillip Baggaley, an analyst with Standard & Poor's, says the pace of American's recovery "is disappointing and may be stalling out."

Just a year ago, American was at the breaking point after more than \$6 billion in losses caused by the reces-

sion, the terror attacks of September 2001, tougher competition from low-cost carriers, and fundamental changes in the way that people buy airline tickets.

The company was on the brink of filing for bankruptcy protection until union employees barely approved a package of painful concessions, including layoffs and double-digit pay cuts that saved American \$1.8 billion a year.

With those cuts, the company reduced spending on wages, salaries and benefits by 16 percent through the first six months of 2004.

In early 2003, American had the second highest cost structure in the U.S. airline industry. One year later, American's cost structure was the lowest of the six so-called legacy carriers, the others being United, Delta, Continental, Northwest and US Airways.

American is still not lean compared to low-cost carriers. Southwest Airlines' cost structure is 15 percent lower than American's; JetBlue's is 38 percent lower.

The savings helped AMR cut its first-quarter loss to \$166 million from the \$1 billion loss a year earlier, and to post a \$6 million profit in April-June period. Analysts expect another small profit in the current quarter, which ends Sept. 30.

"American is off the critical list," says CEO Gerard Arpey, who sometimes lugs a small, rectangular sheet of metal with holes in it to employee rallies and meetings with Wall Street analysts to prove that American is committed to cutting bloated costs.

The grill provides the foundation for airplane seats. Until recently, American bought the supports for about \$1,000 apiece. Now, employees make them for \$157.

Fourteen-dollar Italian blankets offered to customers during flights were replaced with \$8 throws from China, and American saved \$600,000 on silverware by buying plastic utensils in an Internet auction.

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

CAMPUS BULLETIN

KHS student orientation today

This is to inform the parents/legal guardians of Kagman High School students that the orientation for school year 2004-2005 will be held today, July 27, for the sophomores (10th grade) and the freshmen (9th grade). The orientation would begin at 9am in the school cafeteria.

KagES parent, student orientation

Kagman Elementary School will start classes on Aug. 2, 2004 for school year 2004-2005. Instructional time for 1st-5th graders begin at 7:30am and ends at 2:15pm The Kindergarten morning session begins at 7:30am and ends at 10:30am The Kindergarten afternoon session begins at 11:30am and ends at 2:15pm.

There will be a parent/student orientation on July 30, Friday, at 3pm in the school's cafeteria. At the orientation, parents will know their child's classroom location and will meet their child's teacher. Important forms, handbooks, and school calendars will be distributed.

Chacha Oceanview student orientation

Chacha Oceanview Jr. High School is informing all parents and legal guardians that there will be an orientation for all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students for school year 2004-2005 on Friday, July 30, at 9am in their homeroom class. Please check your name and your homeroom number on the school bulletin board.

For more information, call Chacha Oceanview Jr. High School at 664-4100/4113.

HJHS student orientation

The Hopwood Junior High School will be holding its orientation for 7th graders on Thursday, July 29, 1-4pm. Please drop by the school library near the office to find your homeroom, then proceed to your homeroom to meet your teachers and pick up your class schedule and forms.

The 8th grade open house will be held the following day, Friday, July 30th, from 1-4pm.

On both days, our National Junior Honor Society members and student

government members will be on hand for campus tours.

If you cannot make it on either date or time, come by the school at your convenience and check the posted class schedules in the glass display case outside the main office.

MHS class, orientation schedule set

In preparation for the opening of this school year, students of the Marianas High School are required to visit the counseling office on the dates listed below to pick up class schedules. Textbooks from last term need to be returned before receiving schedule.

All students	July 28 and 29, 8am-3:30pm
Make-up day	July 30, 10am-3:30pm

Orientation for incoming freshmen and new students will be held on Friday, July 30, at 9am in the Marianas High School Gymnasium. All parents and legal guardians, with their students, are invited to attend.

Classes will begin on Monday, Aug. 2 for all students. Students are reminded that the 1st period bell rings at 8:25am.

MULTIPLE

From Page 1

adoption in the Commonwealth Register. Newman, who was part of the group that drafted the regulations, commended the efforts of assistant attorney general James Livingstone and Tenorio, who were mainly responsible for the draft.

He also commended others who helped, including assistant attorney general Kevin Lynch, Labor director Dean Tenorio, Labor deputy director Gil San Nicolas, and lawyer Joe Hill, who represented Filipino worker Bonifacio Sagana in a federal court case against the former CNMI Department of Labor and Immigration.

The Labor Department came up with the regulations pursuant to a settlement reached between the government and Sagana in the civil lawsuit. U.S. District Court chief judge Alex R. Munson had consented to the settlement agreement.

Secretary Tenorio certified the adoption of the regulations last Friday. The first version of the new rules was published in the Commonwealth Register on April 26, but it had to be republished to incorporate public comments in the draft. In certifying the regulations' adoption, Tenorio said the appropriate time for public comment expired without resulting in the modification of the republished versions.

The new rules allow nonresident workers to engage in multiple employments, including casual work. Local preference in hiring remains in effect.

"Nonresident workers have no right to secure work from other employers during the first year of employment unless the primary employer employs nonresident workers working under approved contracts for reduced hours," the new rules state.

After the worker's first year of employment, however, the rules mandate the primary employer to sign a Primary Employer Permission Form allowing the worker to work for one or more other employers if requested, unless the employer provides a valid business

reason why the employee should not be allowed secondary employment.

Valid business reasons include scheduling conflict, protection of trade secrets and productivity issues. For those working under approved reduced hour schedule, the rules allow these workers to seek secondary employment despite the primary employer's objections.

"If employee makes a written request to work for a secondary employer to their primary employer and the primary employer does not deny the request within 20 days, the primary employer's consent is presumed," the rules state.

The regulations provide workers protection from employers who may seek to reduce their work hours, banning the employers from hiring new workers under secondary employment contracts during the duration of the approved work reduction.

However, the rules allow the workers to take advantage of this provision during the duration of an amended contract for an increase or reduction of hours by allowing them to seek secondary employment.

The Labor director may approve a secondary employment contract that is less than full-time employment, but the contract must state the weekly maximum hours the workers' services are anticipated.

"The secondary employer does not have to guarantee any minimum number of hours that they will require the services of a nonresident worker in the Secondary Employer Employment Contract. The secondary employer is not liable for any wages for hours that the nonresident worker does not actually perform any service or labor, unless the ...contract states that they are so liable," according to the regulations.

If the alien worker works more hours than the maximum hours for secondary employment, the worker and his employer are in violation of law "to the extent that they exceeded the maximum hours."

If the secondary employment contract, however, provides full-time employment and contains a provision on overtime, the nonresident worker may

work more than 40 hours in a week.

The regulations state that primary and secondary employers may enter into a memorandum of understanding on division of employer's responsibilities to the workers. Such an agreement may cover subjects such as medical, board, lodging and repatriation expenses for the worker—and even scheduling arrangements.

In the absence of such agreement, the primary employer's obligations will not change, except for medical expense obligations, which will be proportionately shared with the secondary employer pursuant to the regulations.

"The primary employer shall remain liable for all medical expenses incurred by the nonresident worker except those incurred as a result of injury, illness, or other condition requiring medical care suffered within the scope of employment of the secondary employer. The secondary employer will be liable for all medical expenses incurred as a result of injury or illness the employee suffers within the scope of their employment," the rules state.

Employers who want to hire nonresident workers employed with a primary employer may apply for the secondary employment's approval from the Labor Department as if they were primary employers.

A nonresident workers' secondary employment application must include the secondary employer employment contract, a copy of the nonresident workers' entry permit and a two-year work certification form if the employee seeks work of different category from his primary employment, among other requirements. Secondary employment may be renewed.

The Labor Department also allowed nonresident workers to engage in casual employment of up to 16 hours in a 30-day period, subject to its approval.

The new rules allow alien workers' immediate relatives to work if they entered the CNMI pursuant to 3 CMC § 4437(i). The worker, however, will be required to abandon his IR entry status. "The former IR shall not be required to exit and reenter the Commonwealth to effectuate a change in status."

INOS

From Page 1

currently working in the PSS.

The adoption of the Praxis test, a national standardized test of teacher subject knowledge, should be viewed as a benefit to teachers, Inos said, as it provides direct evidence of their competency. "It will also help the PSS better target professional development and in-service training for teachers."

The commissioner said that proof of teacher core knowledge is one of the three key requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act. The other two are that all elementary and secondary teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree and have attained full state teacher certification.

The Public School System receives over \$10 million in federal grants that are conditioned on compliance with the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Inos reiterated that she is confident of the skills and professionalism of the teachers serving in the CNMI's public schools.

"Passing the Praxis test," the Commissioner argued, "will be no more difficult for the vast majority of our teachers, than is developing an end of the quarter test for their students."

Earlier, teacher representative Ambrose M. Bennett had expressed disappointment over the BOE's decision to start requiring the Praxis test for teachers.

Although he supports testing, Bennett said teachers deserve the right to have some input before a final approval of the requirement.

"With Praxis testing not being a requirement under the present teacher

contract, there could be some opposition to the testing being forced on teachers," he said.

He also scored the fact that teachers will have to shoulder the expenses for taking the exam.

This issue comes on the heels of a recent controversy on the U.S. mainland involving the Praxis exam, where about 4,100 people who passed the test were incorrectly told they failed, delaying or preventing some from getting jobs.

The Educational Testing Service, a private company that administers more than 12 million tests worldwide, is now tracking down each person who received a faulty score to apologize and refund the \$115 test fee and other expenses.

The company also notified the 19 states that use the Praxis exam in question, one that tests teaching and content knowledge for prospective educators of grades seven to 12.

As part of a regular review of scores, ETS found two groups of test-takers were given inappropriately stringent scoring on short-essay answers, said spokesman Tom Ewing.

Panels of current or retired teachers are routinely hired by ETS to grade the tests, he said.

The 4,100 people who received incorrect scores were among 40,000 people who took the test from January 2003 through April 2004, the company said.

A significant number of those who got faulty scores took the test again and passed, Ewing said, but he acknowledged "there are undoubtedly some who were turned away" from teaching jobs because of the error. **(With AP)**

8 COUNTRIES

From Page 1

diar family members of senior citizens may themselves apply for CEPs. Their permits will expire with that of the age-eligible applicant.

CEP holders may stay in the Commonwealth for up to 90 days, but they may not remain outside the CNMI for more than 10 consecutive days. Also, they may not get a CEP renewal, or be issued a CEP within 30 days after the expiration of any other permit.

"Aliens present in the Commonwealth pursuant to a comity entry permit cannot conduct business or perform services during their stay; such activities constitute grounds for immediate revocation," a portion of the regulations said.

Two other types of visitor permits

are the short-term tourist entry permit and the long-term tourist entry permit.

The short-term permit allows a tourist to enter the CNMI for 30 days, while the long-term permit allows a tourist to stay for either an additional period of 60 days after entering on a short-term permit, or a single period of 60 days.

A long-term permit is obtained by submitting proper documents to the Division of Immigration and paying a \$100 fee.

It may only be issued after an applicant has been outside the CNMI for at least 30 days, except that one long-term permit may be issued as an extension of a short-term permit. However, a person in the Commonwealth under a long-term permit may immediately obtain a short-term permit before the long-term permit expires.

ACTUAL

From Page 1

that we have been practicing but are not on the books legally," Tenorio said.

"Because this is a whole new set of ideas and procedures, we will need preparation time to revise our form and processes, train our staff and educate the public."

Tenorio also bared plans to conduct forums and briefings on the new regulations.

He advised workers to direct to the department any questions or comments they may have about the new policy, instead of simply following what they hear through the grapevine.

"Don't follow the rumors. Wait for our briefings. The rules are not always crystal clear. If you rush, there are things that you can misunderstand. Just

give us some time," Tenorio said.

Besides allowing alien workers to hold multiple jobs, the new regulations raise the nonresident workers' surety bond and other labor processing fees.

Under the new policy, the bond's coverage would be equal to six months' wages from the current two or three months' wages.

Among the new fees introduced are \$30 for every 30-day period and a maximum of \$250 yearly for multiple employment; \$20 for filing a complaint; \$75 for a temporary work authorization and \$25 to renew a TWA; and \$25 for a contract amendment.

The new rules also allow casual employment of workers and temporary transfers within the same business, and present a formal procedural guide for the department's administrative hearing office.

Business

Asia

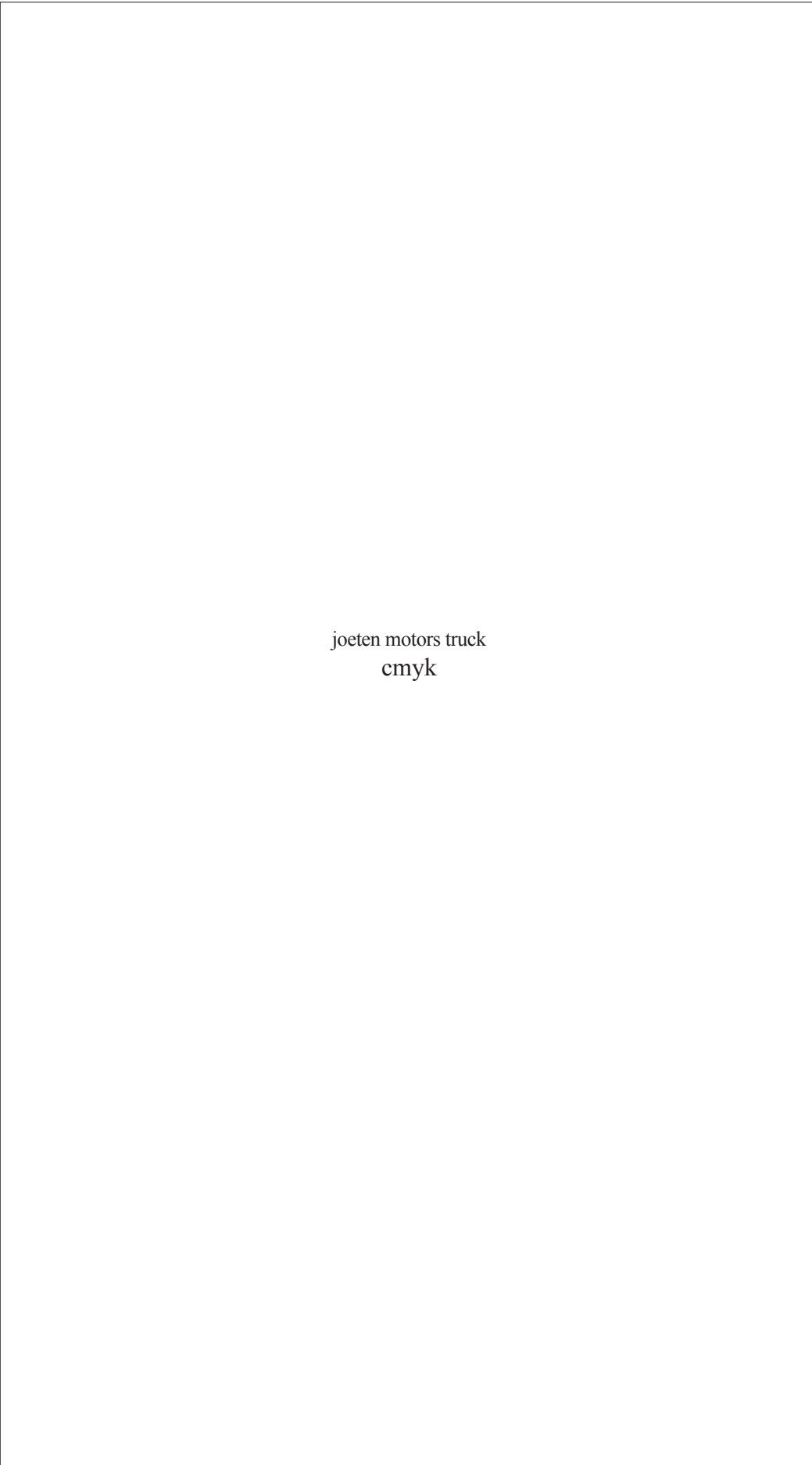


World

tribune graduation ad

Overdrive

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Life & Style

Finding the time

By JANELLE ERLICHMAN DIAMOND
THE WASHINGTON POST

Summer is a tough time to wear a watch. Free-spiritedness and the risk of unsightly tan lines outweigh the need to know if it's noon or 1. But fall is a different story.

"Watches," says Amanda Gizzi, spokeswoman for the Jewelry Informa-

tion Center, an industry group based in New York, "highlight the individual's personal style and add the finishing touch to any outfit."

Fat bands, big faces and colorful graphics are popular now. Designer Paul Frank was inspired by the furniture designers of the '60s and '70s. "What would go better with furniture of the '60s and '70s? Electronics of the same era! I love the look and shapes of turntables, amplifiers and transistor radios," says Frank. "The clean straight lines, stainless steel surface, cool-looking knobs and switches are all things that I adore. I'm also into old advertising clocks like you'd see at the pizza parlor. Designers just knew how to do things right back then."

These days, men are in the pink

By TANIKA WHITE
THE BALTIMORE SUN

Think pink.

If you're picturing ballerina shoes or a flouncy sundress—pretty, girly, feminine things—then you're way behind the times.

These days, pink is popping up in the most unlikely places. Over hairy chests. Covering bulging biceps. Atop a buzz cut.

This is the summer of the masculine pink. Rappers, politicians, business types, inner-city boys on the city bus—all dressed in bubble gum, cotton candy, sunset pinks. For them, and other confident men, pink is the new white.

"Pink is just fly," said Kenny McAllister, who studies lifestyle trends at the New York-based marketing company AMPd. "It's big everywhere. Especially on men."

The springy color choice is surprising. Not just because for ages men have been prisoners to the dark, drab latter half of the color spectrum, but also because pink has long been

stereotyped as only for girls. Period. The end.

Today's fashion-forward man is rejecting that idea. If modern women can wear combat boots, tuxedo jackets or Charlie Chaplin hats and still be feminine, then why can't a man wear pink and still be masculine?

"I think it actually shows confidence in your masculinity," said The Apprentice's Kwame Jackson, who more than once this winter was shown across the boardroom table from The Donald wearing a natty pink shirt. "It shows you have like a subtle flair."

Jackson likes the look so much, he's including at least two pink or pink-accented shirts in a line of men's clothing he hopes to launch this fall—a sign that the color isn't just for summer apparel.

In fact, experts say, pink is only going to get hotter—figuratively and literally.

At the recent men's fashion shows in Milan, observers noticed much brighter colors, and many more of them—hotter

pinks as well as brighter oranges, purples and yellows. Passion fruit for the manly man.

"I'm expecting pink to be a trend for the next year," said Stan Williams, fashion editor at Maxim, a popular men's magazine. "And I think it'll be even bigger next summer than this summer."

The pastel trend may have started with the flash-and-dash hip-hop crowd, McAllister said—a daring group that often takes its cues from over-the-top fashionistas such as the ultra-bold Donatella Versace.

In the last several months, rap star and fashion award-winner P. Diddy has turned heads sporting pale pink suits to see-and-be-seen events. Hip-hop mogul Russell Simmons has been photographed in striped pink polos and pink baseball caps. Rappers Fat Joe and Cam'ron unabashedly rock pink from head to toe; even Cam'ron's tricked-out SUV is pink.

"The first guys that were wearing it were wearing it to say, 'I'm so confident in my masculinity, and I'm so hard

and I'm so gangsta, I can wear pink,'" McAllister said, calling such risk-takers "fly guys."

Like most fashion trends, it didn't take long for hip-hop heads and music video-watchers to catch on. The logic goes something like this: If Usher, R&B's latest multi-platinum phenom, can pull the ladies wearing frothy pink pants, then Jamal Generic can sport a pink shirt to the club on Friday, and it's all good.

Now, the ubiquitous white T-shirt worn by every inner-city teenage boy in America is being replaced with Pepto pink tees, or pink polo-style shirts. Baggy jean shorts, unlaced Timberland boots and a crisp, pink three-button polo. Go figure.

"The pink trickled down from the fashion heads to the fly guys to the masses," McAllister said. "And now, unless someone puts on a pink tutu, I don't think people are going to look at it funny."

But pink isn't confined to R&B crooners and corner boys.

In just the latest reminder that the '80s have returned,

Fat bands, big faces and colorful graphics are the watchwords today. From left, Paul Frank Timing's Brace Face and Truck Van TV watches (\$60 each); Armitron Superman watch (\$25); multicolored Monji with safety pin framing (\$95); Peugeot (\$40); leather cuff watch (\$14), at meetmark.com; Hello Kitty (\$15).

Al-Jazeera
broadcasting
from convention

BOSTON (AP)—Among the international media covering the Democratic National Convention, one name sticks out: Al-Jazeera, the Arab satellite news channel accused by the Bush administration of anti-U.S. bias.

Perhaps symbolic of its growing influence, Al-Jazeera even has a skybox in the convention hall, along with the American television networks, although it says it was denied a separate sign with its logo.

Stephanie Thomas, manager and spokeswoman for Al-Jazeera's Washington bureau, said Sunday the logo was taken down shortly after it went up, and the Democratic National Convention Committee has not explained why.

Al-Jazeera is one among many international news organizations covering the convention that will officially nominate Sen. John Kerry for president on Thursday, and Thomas wonders why the Arab network's presence is news.

"It's not really a story, it's just us doing our work," she said.

She says it has been difficult to accomplish that work, however, because the Democrats have not responded to Al-Jazeera's requests for interviews with leading party figures such as Gov. Bill Richardson of New Mexico, who is the convention chairman.

"Al-Jazeera is here to give them a forum" to reach Arab Americans, she says.

At the 2000 nominating conventions Al-Jazeera had only two representatives. This time it has 16, Thomas said.

Thomas notes that because Al-Jazeera's largest audience—Arabs in the Middle East—is eight hours ahead of Boston, live coverage of the convention will be seen by relatively few there. Even so, she says the network plans about 12 hours of live coverage over four days.

"It shows Al-Jazeera really is interested in the elections process," she said.

In June, National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice accused Al-Jazeera of "purely inaccurate" reporting and suggested it was presenting a biased account of developments in the Middle East.

The network issued a code of ethics this month that pledges to "uphold journalistic values of honesty, boldness, fairness and balance."

'Bourne' reigns supreme at box office

By **DAVID GERMAIN**
AP MOVIE WRITER

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Matt Damon's "The Bourne Supremacy," the sequel about the amnesiac assassin he played in "The Bourne Identity," debuted as the top weekend movie with ticket sales of \$53.5 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. That was nearly double the opening weekend take of \$27.1 million for "Bourne Identity" in summer 2002.

Halle Berry's critically derided comic-book adaptation "Catwoman" opened a distant third with \$17.16 million, behind "I, Robot," which took in \$22.05 million to lift its 10-day total to \$95.4 million.

Michael Moore's "Fahrenheit 9/11" was No. 7 with \$5 million, lifting its domestic total to \$103.35 million, the first documentary ever to top \$100 million.

"The Bourne Supremacy," starring Damon as CIA killing machine Jason Bourne, outdid another super-agent with the same initials. The sequel's opening weekend topped the \$47.1 million debut for "Die Another Day," the best premiere ever for the James Bond franchise.

Universal Studios made "The Bourne Supremacy" for about \$75 million, a bargain price in a business where many summer thrillers cost \$100 million or more to produce.

"Making this film at a rea-



Matt Damon as Jason Bourne and Julia Stiles as Nicky in the espionage thriller, "The Bourne Supremacy." AP

sonable budget by today's standards just is something else to celebrate," said Nikki Rocco, Universal's head of distribution.

"Catwoman," which cost a bit less than \$100 million to make, was a disappointment for distributor Warner Bros.

"I was hoping it would open up with a few more dollars in the bank," said Dan Fellman, Warner's head of distribution. "But it's a pretty competitive weekend out there. We'll have to see how we hold up during the week."

"Fahrenheit 9/11," produced for just \$6 million, stands with

Mel Gibson's religious blockbuster "The Passion of the Christ" as the year's big box-office surprises.

Disney refused to let subsidiary Miramax release the documentary, Moore's assault on President Bush over the Sept. 11 attacks, so Miramax bosses Harvey and Bob Weinstein bought the film back and lined up independent distribution. But while Disney chief Michael Eisner said "Fahrenheit 9/11" was too political for the company, he recently said he saw it and liked it.

"Fahrenheit 9/11" has done

more business than anything released so far this year by Disney, which has been in a slump with such duds as "The Alamo," "King Arthur" and "Around the World in 80 Days."

"If you had told me when we were going through all the pre-distribution problems with Disney that this film would gross more than any other Disney film this year, I don't even know how to respond to that," Moore said Sunday.

Two films debuted strongly in limited release. The samurai tale "The Blind Swordsman: Zatoichi" opened with \$56,778

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at North American theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc. Final figures will be released Monday.

1. **"The Bourne Supremacy,"** \$53.5 million.
2. **"I, Robot,"** \$22.05 million.
3. **"Catwoman,"** \$17.16 million.
4. **"Spider-Man 2,"** \$15 million.
5. **"A Cinderella Story,"** \$8.04 million.
6. **"Anchorman: The Legend of Ron Burgundy,"** \$7.1 million.
7. **"Fahrenheit 9/11,"** \$5 million.
8. **"The Notebook,"** \$4.45 million.
9. **"King Arthur,"** \$3.06 million.
10. **"Shrek 2,"** \$2.4 million.

in four theaters. Colin Farrell's drama "A Home at the End of the World" premiered with \$66,000 in five theaters.

Hollywood aims to conquer comic-book fans

SAN DIEGO (AP)—Sometimes the archenemy of a super-hero movie is the super-fan, the kind with the power to create a firestorm of negative buzz on the Internet over a perceived injustice to a beloved character. Now Hollywood has discovered a place where it can try to leap that fan skepticism in a single bound: Comic-Con International.

The sci-fi gathering was attended by an estimated 80,000 people this weekend, including celebrities and filmmakers from such forthcoming films as "Batman Begins," "Fantastic Four" and "Constantine," who tried to show their reverence for the comic book characters they are bringing to the screen.

"There are 80,000 people who are going to pass through here, and there are only 35,000 at the Democratic convention. What does that tell you?" said Lance Henriksen, star of the upcoming "Alien vs. Predator" film.

Thus Michael Chiklis, Emmy-winning star of "The Shield," showed up to talk about his new role next summer as The Thing—the mutated, orange rock-man from "Fantastic Four"—and outed himself as a fellow comic book geek.

"When I was 18, I said, 'If they ever make a 'Fantastic Four' movie I'm going to play Ben Grimm (The Thing's hu-

man name.) ... So now I've called my brother and said, 'What'd I say! What'd I say!'" Chiklis told The Associated Press before a presentation in front of 6,500 convention attendees. "I had a big affinity for (The Thing)—a kinship for the lovable lug with a temper."

Unlike people who favor comedies, dramas, mysteries, thrillers or romance, the sci-fi and fantasy fans take an almost possessive stance on their entertainment and relentlessly hound transgressions in chat rooms and Web sites in the months leading up to a movie's release.

Such aficionados turned green with anger over the computer-animation for "The Hulk," and mercilessly whipped Halle Berry's leather dominatrix costume in "Catwoman"—two films that never recovered from the early online drubbings.

But when fans approve, they show up in droves again and again, and tell their friends. Those repeated ticket sales are a necessity if such hugely expensive movies as "Spider-Man 2" or "X2: X-Men United" are to turn a profit.

"Constantine," which stars Keanu Reeves as the title character, a vigilante who comes back from the dead to fight evil, had a number of hurdles to overcome at Comic-Con.

Director Francis Lawrence said the movie title was changed from the original "Hellblazer" because it was too close to "Hellraiser," the horror series about the demon Pinhead.

The look of "Constantine" is also different: Once blond and British, Constantine is now the dark-haired American Reeves. Lawrence said he felt confident the "Hellblazer" comics lovers could be persuaded to accept the changes.

"I think a lot of fans think we're out to make this big 'Van Helsing,' splashy, effects-laden movie, and it's not true at all. It's a character piece," the director told the AP, referencing a recent fantasy film derided for its silliness.

Other movies that fit into the fantasy genre—but are not necessarily comic book adaptations—also showed up at Comic-Con to win approval.

But fans don't just want respect for the characters; they also want respect for themselves.

When Sarah Michelle Gellar arrived Saturday to promote her upcoming horror thriller "The Grudge," the first question she got was: Why, during seven years of "Buffy the Vampire Slayer," had she never visited Comic-Con before?

Gellar anticipated that reaction and read a top-10 list of joke excuses. The audience laughed

only sporadically—they wanted a real answer.

They eventually warmed to her, but first she had to give them some tough love back.

When one woman asked Gellar whether she ever turned to her characters for the inspiration to solve real problems, the actress quipped: "You know they're not real, right?"

That finally earned her an unrestrained laugh from the crowd.

Meanwhile, the makers of the third "Star Wars" prequel revealed the movie's new title: "Revenge of the Sith." But before the title presentation, "Star Wars" producer Rick McCallum had to endure some ugly barbs during a Q&A session.

One woman asked him to please minimize the romance elements in "Episode III" and another asked that he kill Jar-Jar Binks, the silly alien character "who ruined the whole series," according to another fan.

The questioner's attack drew cheers from the audience, drowning out McCallum's reply that they shouldn't worry about Jar-Jar.

Such a hard-core fan base must be taken seriously, says "Alien vs. Predator's" Henriksen.

"They are critical," he said. "Say this movie comes out and doesn't hit every note, that will be letting them down and they're going to get really mad."

Hostess's rush to clean up may not be what it appears

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I'm writing regarding the letter from "Former Houseguest," who complained about his hostess rushing into the bathroom and scrubbing it every morning after he and his fiancée had showered.

When I was a newlywed, I was an insecure hostess and overly concerned about what my guests might think of the state of my house. Perhaps she was trying to impress upon them that she was a careful homemaker. Her rushing in to clean the bathroom may have nothing to do with her not wanting them there.

BEEN THERE IN ROWLETT, TEXAS

DEAR BEEN THERE: Perhaps not; other readers read the letter through the prism of their own experiences, too. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I have a stepdaughter who has a severe case of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). This poor soul can't have company because she must spend all day and all night cleaning the entire house before they arrive. When we visit her, we must be careful not to touch the walls, or she will scrub them, too.

Some people are not even aware that they have this illness until it's so out of control they are advised to seek help. This could be the case with that hostess. It's a terrible illness that results from a chemical imbalance in the brain.

A READER, NASHUA, N.H.

DEAR READER: Thanks for pointing it out. A reader from Texarkana, Texas, who suffers from OCD e-mailed me to suggest that people who have this disorder should contact the Obsessive-Compulsive Foundation Inc. It offers support and education for people with OCD-related disorders, their friends, families and professionals, and it also supports research into the causes and effective treatments. Its Web site is: www.ocfoundation.org. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: I have a different perspective than you on the letter from "Former Houseguest."

I also clean my bathroom every morning, and I am not alone. A lot of people are on a "system" set up by someone we call "the FlyLady." ("Fly" stands for "Finally Loving Yourself.")

She is a county commissioner in the state of Tennessee, who instructs us to get up, get dressed to the shoes, put in a load of laundry, and make our bathrooms shine—every day, first thing in the morning. The bathroom is then presentable for any guests who might come later in the day.

If you would like to see this for yourself, go to www.flylady.net. She is wonderful. She talks about having peace in your homes and a lot of other wonderful things. There are currently 212,899 people following her system. That hostess may well be one of them.

The hostess could have set her routine up long before "Former Houseguest" arrived. Should she have been expected to modify her daily routine just because she had guests? I don't think so!

FLYING IN OREGON

DEAR FLYING: After reading your letter, I stopped by my neighborhood bookstore and spotted a book by Marla Cilley, the FlyLady. It's titled "Sink Reflections" (published by Bantam Books). It was easy to read and chock-full of helpful ideas for the disorganized, as so many people are today. What I liked most about it was Ms. Cilley's philosophy that organization is most easily achieved not through earth-shaking changes, but through a series of baby steps.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

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Dear Abby

Jennings puts 'Jeopardy!' back on the map

By DAVID BAUDER
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—Beverly Herter is in a club that's grown less exclusive by the day: She lost to Ken Jennings on "Jeopardy!" "It's kind of a bonding experience going against Ken," said Herter, a freelance editor from Portsmouth, R.I., who was beaten in an episode televised last week.

Jennings has dispatched 76 contestants on the brain-teasing trivia game, making the Utah software engineer the unlikely of TV stars and juicing a show that's aired quietly for 30 years.

Ratings have soared, Jennings visited both David Letterman and Jay Leno, and newspapers run a daily update on his winnings. The Web site Slate even invented a Ken Jennings drinking game (two sips if he misses a Daily Double). Not bad for a Mormon teetotaler who's oddly proficient in alcohol-related questions.

After Friday's show, Jennings had won 38 straight games and \$1,321,660.

His winning is so methodical, so sweat-free, that his appearances are actually kind of dull.

Call it heresy—but could Ken Jennings ultimately be bad for "Jeopardy!"?

"I could see it getting a little boring if he keeps winning like that," Herter said.

It won't end anytime soon. Jennings set a one-day record

by winning \$75,000 on Friday's episode, the last original episode of the show's season. "Jeopardy!" will air reruns until Sept. 6, when Jennings will return.

"I think it's great," said Michael Davies, executive producer of "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire" and a loyal "Jeopardy!" fan. "There are shows on television that are watched by millions of people every day that are not on the radar. It's good that people are talking about the show."

Jennings made his first appearance on June 2. In his first full week of winning, "Jeopardy!" averaged 8.4 million viewers, according to Nielsen Media Research. During the week of July 5—traditionally one of the slowest TV weeks of the year—the show averaged 12.6 million viewers.

A little-noticed rule change a year ago made Jennings' run possible. Throughout its history, "Jeopardy!" champions were retired after five wins. Last fall, just to spice things up, producers decreed that a champion could keep playing until being beaten. They also recently doubled the monetary value of their prizes.

During a dull TV summer, Jennings is the counterintuitive star. He's made it with his brain, not by double-crossing someone on a tropical island, dating profusely or eating pig rectum.

"Jeopardy!" is probably the only show Jennings could be

on, Davies said. At 30, he's too old for most reality shows, not good-looking enough for the dating shows and he'd probably be grossed out by "Fear Factor," he said.

"It's a timely reminder to television executives and producers that you can get buzz on television in a lot of different ways," he said. "It's not only about being shocking and extreme and over the top."

"Jeopardy!" producers are probably annoyed this happened during the summer, when higher ratings don't mean as much financially, Davies said. When the syndicated "Millionaire" had two big winners on shows taped to air in the summer, he delayed them to the fall.

At the same time, Jennings may not have attracted as much attention in a busier time of year, he said.

Host Alex Trebek and "Jeopardy!" executive producer Harry Friedman have retreated during their show's finest hour, declining interview requests.

Not so for another Jennings victim, Las Vegas casino employee Tim Crockett. He applauded the run.

"Having dynasties in sports never diminishes the sport," he said. "Nobody will say that basketball in the 1990s wasn't any good because of Michael Jordan. People I know who weren't interested in watching the show are now watching."

Crockett tried trash-talking the amiable Jennings backstage to intimidate him. When Jennings complained about having to trek back and forth from his Utah home to Los Angeles for tapings—gee, we feel bad for you, Ken—Crockett said he wouldn't have to worry about that anymore.

Jennings just walked away. Final score: Jennings \$35,000, Crockett \$7,900.

As they waited for their "Jeopardy!" appearances, Herter and Crockett had the unfortunate experience of watching four show tapings where Jennings annihilated opponents. One thoroughly demoralized yet still witty contestant stumped by a final Jeopardy question wrote, "whatever Ken writes" as his reply.

Opponents say Jennings' secret, besides being uncommonly smart, is having mastered the subtle art of hitting his buzzer before anyone else. There's a trick to it that takes time to pick up.

During one game aired last week, Jennings had earned \$9,200 before either opponent even had the chance to answer one question.

On his Web site, Crockett writes that Jennings "is one of the nicest, funniest, smartest, most modest human beings I have ever met. An all-around great guy. He did his best to make everyone feel welcome and at ease."

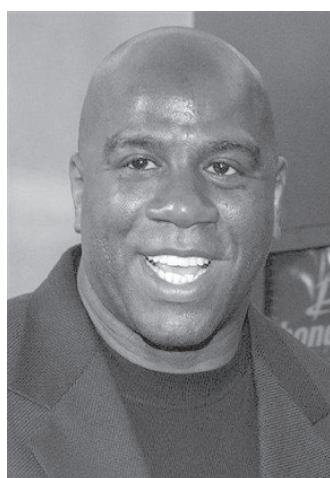
"I immediately hated" Jennings, he wrote.

'Fahrenheit' sets earnings mark for docs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Michael Moore joined the \$100 million club as his political assault "Fahrenheit 9/11" became the first documentary ever to top that mark at the domestic box office.

Moore's condemnation of President Bush's actions regarding the Sept. 11 attacks had a weekend haul of \$5 million to lift its total to \$103.35 million since opening in late June.

"The American people have not been given the whole story about these last three years and they don't feel they've been given the truth from the White House," Moore said Sunday. "So they've gone to the movie theaters to look for the truth and to begin the important discussion and debate that needs to take place in this country."



Johnson

The previous best domestic gross for a feature-length documentary was \$21.6 million for Moore's Academy Award-winning "Bowling for Columbine." That film took nine months to hit that level, while "Fahrenheit 9/11" did more business, \$23.9 million, in just its first weekend.

The polarizing effects of Sept. 11 and its aftermath, with Americans bitterly divided over Bush's invasion of Iraq, have boosted the public's appetite for political documentaries such as "Fahrenheit 9/11," "Control Room" and "Outfoxed," Moore said.

"It's really cool now to talk about politics, and this is the first time I've seen this happen in decades, really," Moore said.

'Magic' Johnson opens Starbucks in Compton

COMPTON, Calif. (AP)—Earvin "Magic" Johnson is heating things up in Compton.

The basketball phenomenon and businessman was on hand Saturday for the official opening of the city's first Starbucks. The Seattle-based coffee chain and Johnson Development Corp. have opened 68 coffee shops in ethnically diverse neighborhoods since 1998.

Johnson has gone on to become an entrepreneur, political activist and part-owner of

"Being apathetic right now is very uncool."

"Fahrenheit 9/11" won the top honor at the Cannes Film Festival in May, but the movie lost its original distributor when Disney refused to let subsidiary Miramax release it because of its political content.

Miramax bosses Harvey and Bob Weinstein bought back the film and arranged for independent distribution through Lions Gate Films and IFC Films.

Democrats have embraced "Fahrenheit 9/11," though Moore said his main goal was to create good entertainment, not dabble in politics. Moore said he has not been contacted by the campaign of Democratic candidate John Kerry and that he did not make the movie to

the Los Angeles Lakers since retiring from basketball more than a decade ago.

Mayor Eric Perrodin said the Starbucks "was like a stamp of approval for the city of Compton" and is symbolic of a new and prosperous time.

Johnson agreed.

"There's something good happening in the city," the former Lakers' star said.

The sentiment is good news for the residents of this Los Angeles suburb whose image

boost Democrats' prospects of winning the White House.

The real effect of "Fahrenheit 9/11" will be to encourage Americans normally disinterested in politics to participate this fall, Moore said.

"I believe the film is going to bring hundreds of thousands of people to the polls who otherwise were not going to vote," Moore said. "I think it's going to have a tremendous impact in that way."

Moore said he had hoped to have "Fahrenheit 9/11" out on DVD before the November election, but that the film could continue to play in theaters through year's end and into 2005.

"So I don't know really what that means now in terms of the DVD," Moore said.

has been tarnished in recent years by a political corruption scandal, a financially troubled community college, and a school district that was under state control for several years because of low test scores and other problems.

Eleanor Stewart, a lifelong Compton resident, was pleased with the new addition to the neighborhood.

"I was even bragging about this to my relatives back East," she said.

Pastimes

Shannon Essenpreis wins Jr. Miss crown

MOBILE, Ala. (AP)—Texan Shannon Essenpreis was crowned America's Junior Miss after belting out a Broadway showtune and soaring through interviews with her "bubbly" personality.

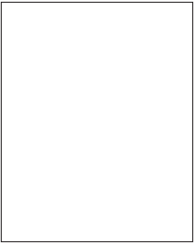
Though Essenpreis was crowned Saturday night, television viewers won't see it until July as producers switch to a "reality TV" format. PAX Network camera crews followed the 50 contestants for two weeks leading up to Saturday's contest.

Essenpreis was among five finalists who were given on-the-spot questions tailored to their individual interests. She was asked how she would use the enthusiasm she's displayed as her school's mascot into her planned career as a broadcast journalist.

"I was so nervous," she said after the show. "And the question was so long that by the end of it, I wasn't sure what they were asking me."

Her answer? She'll report on the positive aspects of life while maintaining her personal optimism.

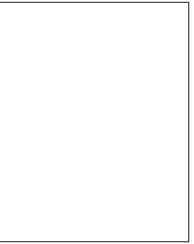
After the contest, Heisman Trophy winner and Junior Miss judge Herschel Walker said he was particularly impressed with Essenpreis' charm and "bubbly" character in her interview last week. Essenpreis won a \$50,000 scholarship.



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